

**Message to the Congress
Transmitting a Report on the
National Emergency With Respect
to Iraq**

July 31, 2001

To the Congress of the United States:

As required by section 401(c) of the National Emergencies Act, 50 U.S.C. 1641(c), and section 204(c) of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act, 50 U.S.C. 1703(c), I transmit herewith a 6-month report on the national emergency with respect to Iraq that was declared in Executive Order 12722 of August 2, 1990.

George W. Bush

The White House,
July 31, 2001.

**Remarks to the National Urban
League Conference**

August 1, 2001

Thank you all very much. Well, Hugh, thank you very much. I'm honored to be introduced by such a good man, and an important leader for our country.

I want to thank the leadership of the National Urban League for inviting me. For those of you who don't live here, I welcome you to the Nation's Capital. You've come here to hold America to its founding promises of justice and opportunity. There are many items on that agenda, from economic empowerment, election reform to criminal justice reform. Right before we came in the hall I had the opportunity to visit with this organization's fine leadership, and my pledge to them and my pledge to you is, I'll work together with you to do what's right for America.

Here in Washington we are reaching a moment of decision on one issue, an issue that is urgent in every urban neighborhood, the issue of education. So this morning, among the Nation's most influential urban leaders, I want to speak about the essential choices facing our Congress and our country when it comes to the reform of our public schools.

Again, I thank my friend Hugh Price for the invitation. I thank him for his diligence.

I thank him for his leadership. I want to thank Ken Lewis, as well. I appreciate so very much Leland Brendsel. I want to thank Ken Blackwell, the secretary of state of Ohio, and Joe Rogers, the Lieutenant Governor of Colorado, who are here. I appreciate so very much the Secretary of Education, Rod Paige, serving our Nation.

You know, when it came to picking the Secretary of Education, I didn't—wasn't interested in picking a theorist or a philosopher; I was interested in picking a doer. And this man has successfully run the Houston Independent School District. He raised the standards, challenged the status quo when there's failure. That's what he and I are both going to do now that we're in Washington, DC.

I also appreciate so very much Larry Thompson, the Deputy Attorney General, for joining us, as well. Thank you, Larry. Where are you, Larry? Somewhere out there.

The men and women of the Urban League know how important our schools are, how much good they can do in the life of a child, and how much is lost when they fail. You've seen both. The mission of the National Urban League is to secure economic self-reliance, parity, power, and civil rights.

And successful schools have always been central to that mission. An equal society begins with in equally excellent schools. But we know our schools today are not equal. The failure of many urban schools is a great and continuing scandal. Rarely in American history have we faced a problem so serious and destructive on which change has come so slowly.

The most basic educational skill is reading. The most basic obligation of any school is to teach reading. Yet, earlier this year, we found that almost two-thirds of African-American children in the fourth grade cannot read at basic grade level. For white children, that figure is 27 percent. The gap is wide and troubling, and it's not getting any better. That gap leads to personal tragedy and social injustice. In America literacy is liberation, and we must set all our children free.

The ability to read is what turns a child into a student. First we learn to read, and then we read to learn. When this skill is not taught, a child has not failed the system; the